

## Vanpoolers Stuck on Ceiling

**H.O.V. 204321**

By Jason Madlung – VanPool Voices Contest Winner

“What’s said on the van, stays on the van.” All riders of the Ravenna/Greenlake van recite these words at least once per week as we head down the H.O.V. lane of the I-5 corridor. This phrase allows everyone who rides to talk freely about their weekend lives on the way to work and let loose with work gossip on the ride home.

It’s not the only way we share information. Not only do we use a suction cup clipboard attached to the windshield to record personal miles, we also publish a monthly newsletter. Inspired by *VanPool Voices*, the riders

of 204321 were looking for something a little more local, with articles written by those most familiar to our north end riders, us! Thus, H.O.V. [*Hell On Wheels*] was

born. Sometimes funny, most of the time just mediocre, it gave all riders a chance to exercise their artistic side and contribute. Reoccurring sections include:

### Mission Statement

*“H.O.V. (Hell on Wheels) is dedicated to the riders of the Ravenna/Greenlake van. H.O.V. will provide fun, thoughtful, informative, subversive, offensive, sensitive, subtle, anti-Hummer, political, socialistic commentary that will stay on the van.”*



Back row, left to right : Mary Michel, Jason Madlung, Wendy Crabb, Rick Meade. Front row, left to right : Teresa O’Driscoll, Brad Bennett, Bridgette Franke

Poetry Slam,  
H.O.V. Personals,  
and everyone’s  
favorite, Ask

Emily (she won’t ask you). Riders can send an e-mail to Emily asking those embarrassing vanpool questions that could never be voiced out loud.

The riders of 204321 didn’t stop there. Looking for a reliable way to track who rode each day, they decided to create little felt cut out’s in the likeness of each rider and stick them to the carpeted ceiling of the van. If a rider rode in the morning, their felt person was stuck to the ceiling, if not, they were tucked behind the visor.

For the riders of 204321, it’s more than just a ride to work.

It is a chance to get to know one another in a trusting and fun way. Whether it’s a news letter, felt people or just plain gossip, “what’s said on the van, stays on the van.”

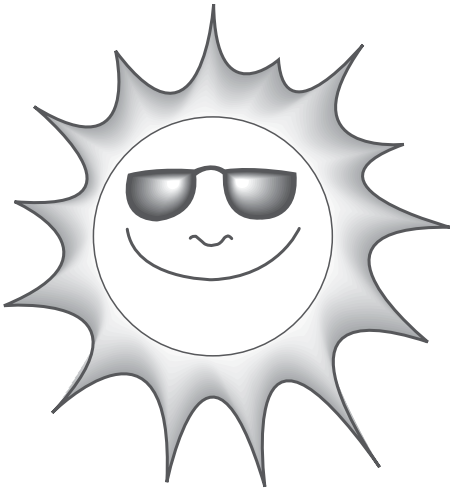
### H.O.V. #204321’s Ask Emily...

**Q:** Dear Emily, why can’t I get a spoon to stick to my nose in the van? I am able to do this at my office desk, but when I try to impress my fellow van riders, I can’t make it stick. I am very frustrated. Please advise! Thank you kindly, – Anonymous

**A:** Anonymous, get a nose ring. Once the nose ring is in place, simply thread the shaft of the spoon through the ring, and it will never fall to your lap again; not even during a nuclear attack. ♦

### Inside VanPool Voices

- **Rideshare Operations Takes Two!**
- **Now Hear This! Rideshare Rewards!**
- **Ease on Down the Road**
- **Bumper Stickers**



## ***Vanpoolers: Win a Trip to Mexico!***

**Once again the Washington State Ridesharing Organization is sponsoring the Wheel Options campaign slated to run from October 11 to October 22. The campaign encourages commuters to give up their solo commute. There will be many great prizes this year including a trip for two to Mazatlan. As vanpoolers you are eligible to enter to win these prizes during the campaign. Visit [www.WheelOptions.org](http://www.WheelOptions.org) for more information and to complete an entry form. ❖**

## ***Now Hear This! Rideshare Rewards!***

Issaquah! Shoreline! Duwamish area of Seattle! Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance!

These organizations are teaming up with the Washington State Department of Transportation to fund special incentives for commuters to reduce solo commute trips. All programs come with rewards for vanpooling and some offer special personalized services to facilitate the formation of new carpools and vanpools.

**City of Issaquah** – New Issaquah vanpooler drivers, bookkeepers, riders and those who help recruit them are eligible for MasterCard gift card bonuses of \$25 - \$50. A special representative will be assisting Issaquah commuters in finding rideshare partners.

**City of Shoreline** – New vanpool and VanShare riders in Shoreline can register with RideshareOnline.com and be eligible for an Employee Rewards MasterCard gift card up to \$150 at the end of their first three months of participation in a vanpool or VanShare. Shoreline also offers gift cards for a \$50 Finders Fee to those who refer new participants to the program.

**Fred Hutchinson and Seattle Cancer Care Alliance** – New carpools and vanpoolers at Fred Hutchinson and the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance can receive MasterCard gift card awards of \$225 - \$275 after three months of participation in a carpool or vanpool.

**Duwamish TMA** – The Duwamish TMA has Easy Rewards for Easy Choices. Those who choose ridesharing to work in Duwamish will have to start choosing how to spend up to \$450 with an Easy Rewards MasterCard gift card.

Please tell commuters you know who commute to these locations about these special financial rewards for ridesharing. Also remind them to check to see if their employer is participating in the programs. If they aren't, tell them to contact us and we can provide the employer with information. Remember these offers are good only until May 31, 2005.

Like the sound of this? We hear you! Call 206-625-4500 and let us help you with the next step. ❖

## ***In with the New***

Teresa Novinski joined Rideshare Operations in July this year. Teresa grew up in the Northwest area and is familiar with the commuting challenges in the Puget Sound Region. She will be working as an Administrative Specialist in VanPool Operations and is very excited to help you make a difference by supporting your participation in vanpool and sharing the ride. ❖



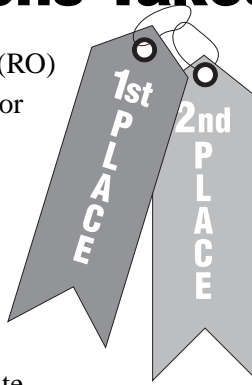
*Teresa Novinski*

# Rideshare Operations Takes Two!

King County Metro's Rideshare Operations (RO) was well represented at the 2004 Association for Commuter Transportation International Conference in New Orleans.

RO's VanShare program brought home first place for Outstanding Service – Public/Private Partnership. This innovative transportation mode allows commuters to "Bridge the Gap" between transit, train or ferry and their work site. RO places a van at a Park & Ride, Sounder station or ferry dock for groups to use to travel short distances to work.

There are currently 65 VanShare groups in operation that travel an average of 11.3 round-trip miles per day. Seventy-three percent of the VanShare riders previously drove to work by themselves, eliminating 200 vehicles from Puget Sound roads each day!



Bringing home second place for Creative Excellence was RO's vanpool Recruiting Program (RPM). The six-month pilot program used existing vanpoolers in Bothell, downtown Bellevue and on Cross-Sound ferry routes to carry the message of vanpooling to co-workers, neighbors and friends. In return, RPM participants were rewarded with a \$50 MasterCard Gift Card for every vanpooler they recruited into any Puget Sound public agency vanpool.

RPM increased vanpool ridership in the three test areas by 7.2% by adding 62 new riders to the program (reducing over 16,000 vehicle-miles traveled each week!). With these new riders, the average vanpool ridership in the test areas was higher than that of vans in the rest of the county. In addition, one recruiter formed an entire van by himself. ♦

***Congratulations to all RO staff members involved in these and all of our other programs!***

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## ***Ease On Down The Road***

It's Hard to Say Goodbye to several staff who decided to ease on down the road to retirement. Their contributions to Rideshare Operations, over the years, helped us provide the successful option of vanpooling to reduce stress and save money and time.

Cindy Winton joined VanPool in January 1990 as a Fleet Specialist and then as a VanPool Service Representative working most recently with invoice processing.

Cindy and her husband Ron, are planning a move to Arizona where they can enjoy warmer weather, visit Las Vegas and entertain their friends and family.

Tom Donahue recently retired after 11 years as Fleet Coordinator in VanPool. This is his second



*Jean Allen*

retirement. His first was from the airline industry. But Tom isn't done yet. He plans to work part time as a consultant exploring transportation



options. He's working toward his third retirement.

Jean Allen began her career with Metro Transit 19 years ago. She moved to VanPool a little over 14 years ago and has helped many customers over the years with their monthly reporting. She is looking forward to many short trips to sunny vacation spots when she retires in October. Jean and her husband plan to join a few local senior centers to do fun activities. Jean tearfully admits she will miss all the vanpool customers and co-workers she's gotten to know while working in Rideshare Operations. ♦

## Bumper Stickers

Slogans and jingles are often made into bumper stickers and placards. This being an election year, there are many endorsements for your favorite candidate. Please remember that your vanpool is a King County vehicle and as such cannot display political statements. So, if you have placed a bumper sticker or placard on your van, please remove it from your vanpool vehicle immediately. Authorized messages permitted on your vanpool are King County Metro VanPool logos, vehicle HOV numbers and the American flag. ❖

## Down That Online Road

Here are Metro Rideshare staff picks for great transportation websites:

- With MyCommute you can get a list of King County road closures and subscribe to road closure alerts to avoid those nasty on-the-road surprises: [www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/mycommute/](http://www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/mycommute/).
- All kinds of ferry information is available at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/). The schedule you're scrambling to find. Daily recommended Wait Times so you're far less likely to miss out on specific boardings. There's even live Ferry Cams at the terminals. You can see who all's ahead of you!
- 'Tis the season for all kinds of fairs and shows. Let Metro do the driving. You'll enjoy it more when you don't



have to deal with traffic and the hassle of far off, expensive parking. See [www.metrokc.gov/](http://www.metrokc.gov/) for info about bus routes, Park & Rides and Special Shuttles to major events. ❖

## VanPool Voices Contest Winners

In the previous *VanPool Voices* we announced a contest for vanpoolers to submit their vanpool story and qualify to win MasterCard gift cards. The winner of the contest is Jason Madlung, HOV #204321. Jason will receive a \$50 MasterCard gift card for his excellent contribution. His story is featured in this issue. The runner up is Stephanie Ponder. She will receive a \$25 MasterCard gift card and her story will be featured in an upcoming *Voices* issue. ❖

## VANPOOL VOICES

If you have questions, comments or story ideas, send them to: Rideshare Operations, YES-TR-0700, King County Metro, 400 Yesler Way, Seattle WA 98104, call (206) 263-4445 or write [cathy.blumenthal@metrokc.gov](mailto:cathy.blumenthal@metrokc.gov).

[www.RideshareOnline.com](http://www.RideshareOnline.com)

On our website:  
*VanPool Riders Wanted Bulletin*  
<http://transit.metrokc.gov>